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RABELAIS ILLUSTRATED

ALTHOUGH it is but three years old, the series of publications started by E. Bernard & Co., of Paris, under the title "Le Nu au Salon" has now become quite a collection in itself. The idea of devoting a special volume to the nude art at each annual exhibition of the Salon, has expanded until it includes volumes devoted to the Universal Exhibition of 1889, the Louvre and the opposition Salons. There are eight of these alone, and now we have a ninth consecrated to the nude in Rabelais, as illustrated by the late Jules Garnier. It will be remembered that this gifted and original artist, who in the rendition of voluptuous feminine beauty had no rival in modern France, crowned the work of his all too brief lifetime with a series of magnificent compositions, inspired by the immortal satire of the immortal Curé of Meudon. This really wonderful gallery created a furor in Paris, where it was first exhibited. The brilliant and burning brush of the artist worthily supplemented the brilliant and mordant pen of the old satirist. Nothing had been known to equal this series of illustrations in France since the days of Gustave Doré's early successes. But Garnier was far superior to Doré in artistic skill, although he did not exhibit—perhaps because he did not have the chance—the same marvelous fecundity of invention. From Paris the Rabelais collection was taken to London, where, with a prurient fanaticism worthy of our own immaculate New York, according to the code of Comstock, it was decided to be immoral. The exhibition was interdicted, and it was even proposed to destroy the pictures. Fortunately, however, the intelligence of Great Britain revolted against this monstrous declaration of epicene savagery, and the pictures were saved.

From the pictures in this collection a selection has been made which constitutes the pictorial part of "Le Nu de Rabelais," which is the latest issue of the Bernard series. The plates are reproduced in photo-type directly from the originals. The text is, as usual with the series, provided by Armand Silvestre. Perhaps the fact that this inimitable writer of the froth and foam of modern literature was a personal friend of the dead artist inspired him to an unusual brilliancy of effect. At any rate, his text is a masterpiece of his best style. The plates are printed separately, while the text is relieved by emblematical head and tail pieces by Japhet. Either as part of a series the early numbers of which are becoming rare, or on its own account, the book deserves a place on the shelf of every collector of modern illustrated literature. Mr. J. W. Bouton is the agent in America.

THE DECEMBER "ART AMATEUR"

THE December issue of the *Art Amateur*, just to hand, reminds me of a duty I have long had in contemplation for this really great art magazine. This is to draw the attention of any of my readers who may not have the good fortune to know it, to a publication that has not a dull line in it, that is edited with the best of taste in text and illustration, and that, above all, is alive. It does not rehabilitate old news, or wait for news to come to it, but gives us news of its own, and in a way that makes news readable. It makes few mistakes and many hits in the bull's eye. The December issue is the commencement of its twenty-sixth volume, which means that the *Art Amateur* now enters upon its thirteenth year. It has won its title to many more years of increasing prosperity upon what it at present enjoys, and its own efforts to deserve them are a guarantee that it will not fall short of its reward.

There are so many features of special interest in the December issue of the *Art Amateur*, that I may as well restrict myself to one—that of its color illustrations. This issue presents four distinct color supplements—a Flemish tapestry, "The Nativity," in the Spitzer Collection; "Good Morning," by Helena Maguire; Winter Landscape (in progressive stages), by Bruce Crane; and a Cupid Plate in China Painting, by Lucy Comins. The execution of these chromatic plates is of the first order, and next to admiring their excellence one must admire the courage of the publisher who supplies them. But one of the prints demands especial notice. This is the reproduction of the tapestry in the Spitzer Collection. On its reduced scale—as far as its effect is concerned—it is almost a piece of old tapestry itself. The naïve execution of the old artists, their powerful but not bright color, and even the texture of the fabric in which the picture is woven, are as close to the real thing as mechanical reproduction can well come. In connection with this admirable plate I may remark that the magazine also begins an article, illustrated in the text, upon this wonderful collection, which will open people's eyes to the possibilities of collectorship. Address, Montague Marks, 23 Union Square, New York.

There are several old factories and industries, once great and later fallen into oblivion, which have been revived by the love of art and pretty things developed in our age, notably the glass works of Murano, in Venice, which Dr. Salviati, with untiring taste and energy, has succeeded in making a colossal triumph. There may be among the old master-works of the Venetian glassblowers lighter pieces in some museums, but nothing more beautiful than the forms produced by Salviati and his artist-workmen; nothing more wonderful than his mixed colors and aventurine golds can well be conceived. Their very perfection lends itself to unauthorized and dishonest use. It is an absolute fact that much of this modern fabric is offered as old Venetian in this country, and there is an English artist now in New York, who some years back designed hundreds of forms of glasses, mirrors and bowls for the Murano factory, who told me that at Tiffany's he had been shown some of his own designs as being veritable verres de Venise.

NUGGETS FOR NUMISMATISTS

LEVI K. LANDIS, machinist, living at No. 409 East King street, Lancaster, Pa., is the owner of an American gold eagle, one of the few struck off at the United States Mint on July 6, 1795. It has been in the family for seventy years, and is well preserved.

Mrs. Lizzie B. Link, of Louisville, Ky., owns a Spanish dollar of 1801, a Central American real, or 12½ cents, the obverse a palm tree and the date, 1830, the reverse showing a tropical sunset, and a French one-quarter franc piece, dated 1834, and bearing the name and likeness of Louis Philippe.

Louis Duenweg, of Terre Haute, Ind., has a Chinese copper cent, Hong Kong, 1866; copper coin, Chili, 1851, Medio Centava; farthing 1866; Belgian cent, very small copper coin, 1862; Cere 1872, Swedish copper coin; Dutch copper coin, 1864; ½ shilling, Danish copper coin, 1867; groschen, Hanover silver coin, 1808; German pfennig, nickel; cent copper, New Foundland, 1865; Russian silver piece, 20 Ropeskes, 1870; Hanover, 2 Thalers, 1855; Prussian crown thaler, 1861, King William and Augusta together; Guilder Frankfurt on the Main, 1850; Guilder of Bavaria, 1841; Franc, Napoleon III, 1867; Reichsthaler, 1814, King Frederick William III, of Prussia; Russian silver coin, 1833, 1-6 thaler; silver coin from Saxony, 1854, ½ thaler; ½ thaler, 1772, Frederick II and the Great of Prussia; ½ thaler, 1862, Frederick William II, King of Prussia, Swiss silver coin, 1850; Bavarian silver coin, 1807 and 6 Kreutzer; copper coin, 1853, Napoleon II, six centimes; silver piece, Queen Anne, 1 shilling, 1702 to 1714; copper 1 kreutzer, 1816, Austria: ½ cent, U. S. of America, 1828; Turkish copper coin; ½ franc, Louis Phillip I, France, 1841; Dutch 10 cents, 1848, silver; 20 centimes, French Republic, 1851; silver coin, 1750 City of Bremen; U. S. of America 1836, silver 5 cent piece; Spanish silver coin, 1817; ½ franc 1812, Napoleon I; Kreutzer, Nassau, 1825, silver; 10 cent piece, Shannon; Sutler check, 85th Regt. Ind., Vol.

The U. S. cent of 1877 is a rarity by all accounts. Business during 1877 was at a very low ebb, and little demand existed for pennies. Few were minted, therefore, while in 1876 and 1878 the call was urgent. It is doubtful if the exact number stamped "1877" is known even to the mint officers themselves. An inquirer was informed by them in February, 1878, that less than ten thousand had been stamped. This would mean an issue of less than a million. In point of fact, however, it is probable that the actual coinage was far less. A coin collector began in 1881 a record of the number of pennies passing through his hands, and took the percentage of 1877 to the other dates. In 1881 he found the percentage to be .0048, in 1882 it was .0034, in 1883 it was .0032, in 1884 it was .0028. The record was abandoned after that, but from time to time examinations were made which showed the percentage had moved nearer the zero point. An examination of a quart of pennies collected this year from a slot machine showed but one of the 1877 date. Unfortunately, the examiner did not learn how many pennies there were in the lot, so the present percentage cannot be given.

In a banker's window on Nassau street, near Ann, is a frame containing sixteen of 1877 date, showing that one man at least has awakened to their rarity. One collector who has been on the lookout since January, 1878, has secured eighty-four of this date. Look over your change hereafter.

CURIOSITIES OF COLLECTORSHIP

A LEICESTERSHIRE clergyman, when he died in 1776, left behind him thirty gowns and cassocks, 100 pair of breeches, 100 pair of boots, 400 pair of shoes, eighty wigs, although he never hid his own hair with one, eighty wagons and carts, fifty saddles, thirty wheelbarrows, fifty dogs, 240 razors and so many walking sticks that a toy man paid his executors £8 for the lot.

An old man died in an attic in Paris, who left little behind him save a heap of corks, souvenirs of happy times he had spent in more prosperous days. It had been a lifelong custom with him to preserve every cork drawn for the delectation of himself and friends, and inscribe upon it the date of drawing, and the particular occasion upon which the bottle was opened, so that the cupboard of corks was actually a record of his life.

Heber, the famous bibliomaniac, gathered up things merely for the sake of collecting. He spent his fortune and life in collecting books which, when he had secured them, lay untouched and uncared for in the houses he rented in his own country and abroad to store them in. He had over 117,000 books in London alone, while no one knew how many houses full he had abroad. He used to defend his extravagance in buying up duplicate copies of the same work, upon the ground that no man could do comfortably without three copies of the same work—one to be kept at his country house as a show copy, one for the service of borrowing friends and one for his own especial use.

A New England spinster has made a collection of thimbles used by famous women. She has inherited, purchased, begged or received as gifts over thirty gold, silver, brass or steel thimbles worn by actresses, artists, philanthropists, abolitionists, poets, etc. Another eastern woman has made a vast collection of tea-pots, having made a journey to Japan and China for the purpose of securing rare specimens of that article.

A unique collection is to be seen in the office of the Tennessee Lumber Company, in Cincinnati. It is composed of different kinds of sawdust, contained in over 100 glass vials neatly labelled and in a case. They were collected by Thomas B. Fitts, who commenced to make up the collection some years ago. There is a little history connected with each one.